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Canadians' views on national
issues, community problems,
urban growth and governmental
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CANADIANS' VIEWS ON NATIONAL ISSUES,
COMMUNITY PROBLEMS, URBAN GROWTH
AND GOVERNMENTAL ACTION

Report on the
Pilot Survey on Canadian
Urban Concerns


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Urban Institutions and Services

August, 1975

Ministry of State for Urban Affairs
Département d'État chargé des Affaires urbaines

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CANADIANS' VIEWS ON NATIONAL ISSUES, COMMUNITY PROBLEMS,
URBAN GROWTH AND GOVERNMENTAL ACTION

I INTRODUCTION: The study's focus and the nature of the sample

Are the largest Canadian cities already too large? Are they growing too fast? Should subsidization of public transportation be extended as a means to improve the quality of life in urban centres? These and other questions are addressed by policy makers at all three levels of government. They are also issues on which the general public can be expected to have an opinion. Survey research is, therefore, an important technique for attempting to uncover the attitudes and opinions of Canadian citizens with respect to a wide variety of problem areas with which MSUA is vitally concerned.

Although survey research cannot tell policy makers what to do, it can serve to sensitize them to areas of public concern or indifference and identify the extent to which perceptions of issues vary among Canadian citizens according to their socio-economic or cultural characteristics.

The analysis of such variations is essential in a country as complex as Canada: often figures presented as a national average obscure regional and/or linguistic deviations of marked significance. By the same token the size of the community in which a citizen resides must also be taken into account: Ministry policy makers need to know, for example, whether concern for the management of urban growth is stronger (or weaker) than the national average among those citizens who live in the largest

cities and who, therefore, presumably experience its effects most profoundly. With survey data the thrust of the analysis is always in the direction of seeking more refinement by "controlling" for the influence of other, possibly more important, explanatory variables.

Because it is a pilot survey, the sample on which the present report is based limits the extent to which the explanatory variables may be "controlled". This limitation was accepted as a factor in the tradeoff that had to be made between an exploratory study of limited cost and duration and a major, more costly and time-consuming effort.

A thorough canvas of existing survey data on urban-related issues in Canada had turned up relatively little of value -- occasional questions on the adequacy of housing or attitudes towards immigration, but little more. There was very little guidance, then, on either the salience of a wide range of issues of interest to Ministry officials or the manner of posing the issues (i.e., wording the questions), a matter of considerable concern to survey researchers. Faced with virtually uncharted seas, it appeared best to proceed cautiously with a sample size adequate to the purposes for which it was intended and by means of a relatively brief questionnaire, administered as part of a larger interview with respondents chosen across Canada by an experienced survey firm with a national reputation.

The price of a brief questionnaire was that only a few major issues could be selected; that even these could not be pursued in as much detail as might be desired; and that the selection of socio-economic variables (i.e., presumed independent or explanatory variables) had to be pared to the minimum. Fortunately we were able to rely on a number of standard demographic variables which are routinely collected and provided by the survey firm and we could thus concentrate our questionnaire items in some three or four major areas of substantive concern.

The pilot survey focuses on evaluations of national and community problems; attitudes toward controlling urban growth, including the level of government considered most responsible for doing so; attitudes toward subsidizing public transportation views on a "New-Town policy for Canada" and reactions to the three basic forms of taxation in Canada.

Even considering the problems with controls noted above, limitations associated with sample size are not serious in a pilot survey of the present type. Our basic concern is to map the contours of the public's awareness of (or positions on) certain urban-related issues, not to estimate the precise numbers, nor even to analyze and "account for" them in great detail. A sample of the size of the present survey -- 1031 respondents over eighteen years of age, selected across Canada by a combination of random and quota methods -- would be of little use in estimating the current unemployment rate, for example. When conclusions

as to trend depend on changes of a fraction of a percentage point, a much larger sample than that used in this pilot survey would be required to provide an accurate estimate.

Our sample would have to be much larger as well, if our purpose were to say without qualification that a certain proportion of the Canadian people (say 25.5%) hold a certain view; the sample error would be even greater for an estimate of a sub-sample, say one consisting only of respondents from British Columbia.

Care should be exercised, then, not to make too much of the precise values of the figures derived from the survey. The utility of the survey is in providing insights into the general profile of the public opinion and into the demographic characteristics with which major variations in viewpoint are associated. The limitations of the relatively small sample occur mainly when further regional or provincial "controls" are deemed necessary and when the number of cases therefore remaining in the provincial sub-sample become too small to permit further divisions of the respondents into those various sub-samples. However the small provincial sub-samples result from the very demographic structure of the country. It would require a very large sample indeed and a special sampling design to overcome problems of this sort. Ultimately the difficulties related to

sample size (within the range customary with opinion surveys) are only a matter of degree and can largely be countered by attention to appropriate statistical tests and by a generally conservative stance towards the interpretation of percentage differences which appear in the tables.

With this observation, we turn to the results of the Pilot Survey of Urban Concerns carried out for the Urban Institutions and Services Directorate during the first week of April of this year.

II PERCEPTIONS OF NATIONAL ISSUES

Our review of existing survey data showed that whenever the Canadian Gallup Poll has asked Canadians to answer the question of "What is the most important problem facing Canada?", few have volunteered an urban-related issue apart from the problem of housing prices. Knowing this, we approached the question in a somewhat different manner in our survey. At the beginning of our section of the questionnaire -- before any of the other questions on urban growth could bias the respondents in favour of urban-related concerns -- we handed respondents a card containing six issues, including two which were directly urban-related and two which might be so interpreted, and asked them to rank them according to their importance to the respondent. The purpose was to see how much concern existed for issues such as "urban growth into agricultural land" and "big city congestion" as compared to such strong contenders as "inflation" and "unemployment". The other items -- "crime" and "pollution of the environment" -- have been popularly associated with urban growth, but their connection (or possible connection) with the city was not made explicit in the wording of the questionnaire. Further, a subsequent question, this time asking "What do you think is the most important problem here in your community?", with a probe for a second problem, was designed to maximize the possibility of an urban-related response.

The results of the ranking question -- presented in two different forms in Tables 1A and 1B -- reveal that inflation (or "increases in the cost of living" as it was put to respondents) was considered the most important issue. Unemployment and crime were virtually tied for second position, the latter receiving more first and the former receiving a great many second rank mentions. The more familiar issue of pollution of the environment ranked fourth, with "urban growth into agricultural land" and the somewhat ambiguous item "big city congestion" appearing far behind.

TABLE 1A
RANKING OF "SIX MAJOR ISSUES FACING CANADA TODAY"

Issues	Cumulative Score*	Rank
Increases in the cost of living	4.85	1
Unemployment	4.20	2
Crime	4.18	3
Pollution of the environment	3.26	4
Urban growth into agricultural lands	2.67	5
Big city congestion	1.90	6

* A score of 6 would result if all respondents ranked an item 1st;
a score of 1 would result if all respondents ranked the item 6th.

TABLE 1B

PROPORTION OF ALL RESPONDENTS RANKING THE ITEMS 1ST OR 2ND

Issues	Ranking	
	<u>1ST</u> %	<u>2ND</u> %
Crime	27	19
Urban growth into agricultural lands	6	7
Increases in the cost of living	41	28
Pollution of the environment	9	12
Unemployment	16	31
Big city congestion	2	3
	<u>101*</u>	<u>100</u>
N=	1026	1020

* rounding error

Interestingly, there were very few strong variations in the ranking of items according to the socio-economic characteristics of respondents. If we examine only the first place rankings, we find some regional variation, but the strongest single difference is the relative ranking of the items depending on the mother tongue of the respondents.

TABLE 2

PROPORTIONS GIVING A FIRST RANKING TO SIX "PROBLEMS
FACING CANADA TODAY" - BY MOTHER TONGUE

Issues	English %	French %	Other %
Crime	28	22	32
Urban growth into agricultural lands	5	7	8
Increase in costs of living	38	50	32
Pollution of the environment	11	7	1
Unemployment	16	13	22
Big city congestion	2	**	3
	100	99*	98*
N=	641	294	91

* rounding error

** insufficient cases

Only with respect to the two most directly urban-related issues was there agreement among respondents of the three mother-tongue groups; otherwise, those of French mother tongue seemed to be far more concerned with inflation and less concerned with either crime or unemployment than the others. Size of community was not significantly associated with ranking ($p < .10$)¹

¹ Pearson's Chi-square test is a technique to test hypotheses between two nominal variables. It helps us to determine whether a systematic relationship exists between two variables, although it does not tell us how strongly those two variables are related. The Chi-square figure is ultimately judged in terms of its probability, such as $p < .01$. What this means is that the particular relationship found would occur by chance in less than one case out of 100. If we set .05 as the confidence level, a relationship with $p < .05$ would be described as being caused by forces other than mere chance or luck.

III PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

A second attempt was made to draw out respondents' perceptions of the importance of urban-related issues, this time by giving them an open-ended invitation to name "the most important" and "second most important" problem "here in your community". It is hard to know whether a respondent's frame of reference really differed between the two questions, even though there are grounds for arguing that one should be able to distinguish between issues facing Canada today and problems of one's own community. In any case, the difference in the form of the question -- the one being close-ended and calling for a ranking of items, the other open-ended -- invited a comparison in the relative importance of the urban-related issues. The results presented in Table 3 are interesting.

TABLE 3

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION: "WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM HERE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?" - FIRST MENTIONS; SECOND MENTIONS; TOTAL MENTIONS, AND RANKING OF ITEMS -- ALL RESPONDENTS

	1st MENTIONS	2nd MENTIONS	% OF ALL RESPONDENTS MENTIONING ITEM	RANKING
Unemployment	12	7	19	(1)
Inflation	12	7	19	(2)
Transportation traffic congestion	8	9	17	(3)
Cultural recreation needs	5	6	11	(4)
Housing	7	3	10	(5)
Pollution environmental control	4	5	9	(6)
Municipal service	4	3	7	(7)
Crime	3	3	6	(8)
Lack of indus- trial growth	4	2	6	(9)
High taxes	3	3	6	(10)
Poor city plan	3	2	6	(11)
Municipal government	3	2	5	(12)
Poor schools	2	1	3	(13)
Inadequate social service	1	1	2	(14)
Moral standards/ behaviour	1	1	2	(15)
N = 1031				

Although not decisively large in terms of their absolute size, clearly the current economic problems of inflation and unemployment were again considered most significant. Taking first and second mentions together, we observe that these were noted by about a fifth of all respondents.

The only other problem areas to be mentioned by at least a tenth of all respondents were: transportation (17%); lack of cultural and recreational facilities (11%); and housing (10%). Only 14% of all respondents were unwilling or unable to point to at least one community problem. The noteworthy fact, however, is that there is very little consensus on the leading issues: Canadians ranged all the way from concern with decline in moral standards to anxiety over deterioration of downtown business areas.

Impact of Community Size on Problem Perception

Utilizing the size of the population of a community as an indicator of degree of urbanization, we examined whether perceptions of community concerns differed according to the degree of urbanization. Statistically significant differences were in fact observed ($P < .001$).

As indicated in Table 4, in medium size communities with populations ranging from 10,000 to 100,000, unemployment was mentioned as the primary community concern, closely followed by inflation. A similar, but weaker, pattern was noticeable in smaller communities. On the other hand, in large

communities with populations of 100,000 and over, urban-related issues such as transportation and traffic congestion, and housing were mentioned as often as unemployment.

Issues centred on increases in crime and the lack of industrial growth were clearly related to the community size differential.

While crime, the inadequacy of police protection, and the use of drugs were ranked fifth in large communities, in small and in medium sized communities, they were ranked fourteenth and ninth respectively. The desire for industrial growth and/or diversification of industry understandably was more apparent in small communities.

However, the salience of the economic problems of inflation, unemployment and transportation related problems did not vary with community size. Among important community problems these issues were ranked highly regardless of the community size.

In general, Canadians were more concerned with the macro-economic problems of inflation and unemployment than with specifically urban-related issues such as housing, transportation, urban sprawl, pollution, or even crime. This finding might result from the particular economic conditions of spring, 1975: a mixture of price instability and high unemployment bordering on a full-scale recession. It might be hypothesized that a return to more normal economic conditions would decrease the

TABLE 4

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION: "WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM HERE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?" - COMBINES FIRST AND SECOND MENTIONS, AND RANKING OF ITEMS, BY COMMUNITY SIZE - ALL RESPONDENTS.*

	% OF ALL RESPONDENTS MENTIONING ITEM 1st or 2nd (RANK)	COMMUNITY SIZE		
		OVER 100,000	10,000 - 100,000	UNDER 10,000
Unemployment	19 (1)	14 (3)	27 (1)	21 (1)
Inflation	19 (2)	17 (1)	24 (2)	18 (2)
Transportation traffic congestion	17 (3)	14 (2)	21 (3)	18 (3)
Cultural recreation needs	11 (4)	8 (7)	11 (5)	15 (4)
Housing	10 (5)	14 (4)	11 (5)	5 (11)
Pollution Environmental Control	9 (6)	8 (6)	6 (9)	9 (7)
Municipal service	7 (7)	5 (10)	5 (12)	10 (6)
Crime	6 (8)	10 (5)	6 (9)	2 (14)
Lack of indus- trial growth	6 (9)	1 (15)	7 (7)	13 (5)
High taxes	6 (10)	5 (9)	6 (8)	7 (8)
Poor city plan	6 (11)	6 (8)	6 (9)	5 (10)
Municipal government	5 (12)	2 (14)	11 (4)	5 (9)
Poor schools	3 (13)	3 (12)	3 (13)	3 (12)
Inadequate social service	2 (14)	2 (13)	3 (13)	2 (13)
Moral standards/ behaviour	2 (15)	4 (11)	1 (15)	1 (15)
	N=1031	N= 502	N= 176	N= 353 (P<.001)

* columns total more than 100% because respondents were allowed to name two community problems

relative salience of unemployment and inflation, and would result in increased public sensitivity to expressly urban issues.

As matters stand currently, perceptions of the relative importance of the various issues discussed were only weakly related to the size of community of the respondent.

It is important to observe whether this consensus extends to proposals for controlling the population growth of Canadian cities.

IV ATTITUDES TOWARD POPULATION GROWTH

Some sectors of informed opinion in Canada have exhibited growing concern about the population size and rate of population growth of several Canadian cities. They point to the increase in the population of Canada's urbanized population (an advance to over 75% by 1971) and the accelerating rate at which the regional imbalance has been compounded as -- with the possible exception of Montreal in the last decade -- the largest population centres continue to grow at the fastest pace. Regional attractiveness, seemingly, has had a built-in multiplier effect.

To counter these apparently "natural effects" -- encouraged importantly, however, by government policies at all three levels -- consideration has been given to the desirability of attempting to control the rate of increase of major urban centres; some would even like to see growth restricted altogether.

What does the Canadian public think about all this? How much support is there for controlling or even restricting the growth of Canadian cities?

To get at one dimension of the public's perceptions on the issue we asked people -- no matter where they lived -- to choose one of the following options for dealing with the population growth of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, Canada's three largest cities:

- . letting the present growth go on
- . permitting some growth, but controlling it

- . stopping the growth
- . reversing the growth

As the results set out in Table 5 indicate, the vast majority chose the second option of permitting some growth, but controlling it. A tenth of the sample had no opinion on the issue.

TABLE 5

POSITIONS ON FOUR OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH THE POPULATION TRENDS OF CANADA'S THREE LARGEST CITIES - BY RESPONDENT'S COMMUNITY SIZE

Options	Community Size				All Respondents %
	Less than 10,000	10,000- 100,000	100,000- 500,000	Over 500,000	
Letting the present growth go on	12	9	17	14	13
Permitting some growth/ controlling it	73	77	64	71	72
Stopping the growth	12	9	9	10	11
Reversing the growth	3	5	10	5	5
	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>101*</u>
N=	307	162	141	317	927

* error due to rounding

While the figures in Table 5 are interesting, it should be noted that statistically significant differences among respondents were not found according to the size of community in which people resided; nor were they associated with their educational attainment. On the other hand, it emerged that respondents whose mother tongue was neither English nor French appeared slightly more disposed to stopping the growth of the three major cities.

When the views of residents of the three largest cities were analysed separately, differences in viewpoint did emerge.

Although residents of Toronto differed little from the national pattern, support for stronger measures for dealing with the population growth of the three major cities was slightly greater in Vancouver and support for a laissez-faire policy was somewhat greater in Montreal.

Further consideration will have to be given to the wording of this question, if it is to be repeated in subsequent surveys, as the results of the pilot study are somewhat mixed. It was our intention to offer the "tough options" of stopping the growth or even reversing it as well as the laissez-faire option of "letting the present growth go on". These categories seem fairly precise; moreover the results indicate that very few people favour them. Unfortunately, the bulk of respondents have opted for the remaining, more ambiguous option of permitting some growth, but controlling it. Subsequent study will need to try to spread respondents out more and attempt to establish at which end of the permit/control spectrum they are actually located. For the moment it is safe to conclude that there is little public support across Canada as a whole for strong measures to stop or reverse the rate of population growth in the three major cities - only about 15% of the sample opted for these alternatives.

V. ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CONTROL OF POPULATION
OF ONE'S OWN COMMUNITY

As fundamental as the question of willingness to see controlled growth of Canada's three largest cities is one's attitude toward controlling the growth of one's own community. Respondents were asked "if it were your job to decide about the future population growth of this area", which of the following options was preferred:

- . encourage new population growth of the area
- . do nothing to affect the current population growth
- . slow down the population growth of the area
- . try to prevent any further population growth of the area.

It should be noted, at the outset, that this range of options is both less ambiguous than that offered in the previous question and also less severe at its one extreme. It is perhaps for this reason that the "anti-growth" group appears larger: 22% of the total sample preferred slowing down the population growth of their own areas and a further 15% favoured trying to prevent further growth.*

* Part of the explanation, too, may be that a considerable proportion of the groups whose position on the metropolitan growth control spectrum appeared uncertain opted for either slowing down (22%) or even preventing (15%) the growth of their own communities - a response which suggests that several respondents definitely favoured the control aspect of the earlier option.

In any case the national sample divided roughly 60/40 on the issue of deliberately restraining growth. The strongest statistically significant association with support for controlling growth was the size of the community in which the respondent resided: the larger the population size of the community, the stronger the anti-growth attitude. ($p < .0001$)

TABLE 6

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN COMMUNITY POPULATION SIZE
AND POSITION ON THE FUTURE POPULATION
GROWTH OF ONE'S AREA

Options	Community Population				All Respondents
	Less than 10,000	10,000- 100,000	100,000- 500,000	Over 500,000	
Encourage new growth	58	45	24	15	36
Do nothing to affect the cur- rent population growth	22	19	27	25	24
Slow down growth	14	23	33	31	24
Prevent further growth	6	13	15	28	16
	100	100	99*	99*	100
N=	324	155	150	313	942
$P < .0001$					

* Rounding error

If the responses are trichotomized we see that support for population control rises from a low of only about a fifth of the residents of communities of less than 10,000 population

to over a majority (59%) of people living in communities larger than 500,000. There were no statistically significant associations with the sex, age or income of respondents, and the apparent relationships between higher levels of education and home ownership (as opposed to renting) with an anti-growth position disappeared under controls for community size.

Regional differences did, however, persist even when controlled for community size, at least among respondents living in cities of 100,000 population and over.

TABLE 7

ORIENTATIONS TO GROWTH OF "THIS AREA"
BY COMMUNITY SIZE AND REGION

Options	Community Size 100,000 and over					All Respondents				
	Region					Region				
	Mari- times %	Que. %	Ont. %	Prair- ies %	BC %	Mari- times %	Que. %	Ont. %	Prair- ies %	BC %
Pro-growth	**	32	11	14	10	48	40	31	38	31
"Do nothing to affect current popu- lation growth"	**	34	19	27	20	26	32	17	26	17
Anti-growth	**	34	70	60	70	26	27	52	37	52
N =		146	183	79	50	80	272	328	153	109
** too few cases for tabulation										
p < .0001						p < .0001				

In Table 7 we note that support for population growth control is much stronger in Ontario and British Columbia; conversely, support for further growth is strong in the Maritimes and in Quebec. The difference between Quebec and the other regions is maintained even when respondents living in the largest cities

are considered separately. However, it also emerges that the apparently weaker support for population control in the Prairies is largely the result of the views of rural residents: among city dwellers (above 100,000 in population) support for controls rises well to above the national average - to 60% of Prairie respondents.

Support for controlling the population growth of one's area is, it appears, fairly widespread in Canada, particularly among residents of the larger cities in Ontario, B.C. and the Prairies. This general observation must, however, be taken along with the previously discussed findings concerning population-control of the three largest cities. There appears to be a general disposition to see growth slowed down among the residents of the larger cities west of the Ottawa River, but it will remain for further study and analysis to discover how people would respond to more geographically specific proposals for slowing or even restricting population growth.

VI. VIEWS ON GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVISM IN MANAGING URBAN GROWTH

The two questions dealing with population growth from the survey did not refer to any particular agent of population control. One asked respondents to choose which of four options they would "most like to see"; the other began with the words "if it were your job to decide about the future population growth of this area, would you [encourage]", etc.

To discover, more precisely how people felt about government intervention, people were asked--immediately after the question posing the options for the three largest cities--the following: "Do you think government should be more active or less active in managing or changing the growth rate of Canadian cities in general?"

Interestingly, Canadians favour, by a margin of almost 2 to 1, greater governmental activism. Twelve percent thought present level of activity was about right; only 4% thought government should be less active; a substantial minority (20%) did not have an opinion on the issue.

But before going any further it is important to ask what these figures mean for a policy of discouraging the growth of urban Canada. The question as posed seeks a reaction to the idea of governmental intervention but it does not indicate whether the action should be in the direction of restraining growth or encouraging it!

In order to explore this question more thoroughly we must examine the results when the sample is divided into three basic groups: (1) those who support greater governmental activism and favour efforts to control the growth of their areas; (2) those who favour greater governmental activism and favour encouraging the growth; and (3) the

rest of the sample (including those who have no opinion, or who want less governmental activity of any sort, or who simply want to do nothing to change the growth rate of their area). This latter group is the largest single collection of respondents in the sample, but there are nevertheless two fairly sizeable subgroups with opposing view points on governmental intervention in growth management worth studying in more detail: the 22% of the sample who want the government to be more active in encouraging growth and the 28% of the sample who want government to be more active is discouraging it. What are the distinguishing characteristics of each?

TABLE 8
PRO-GROWTH AND ANTI-GROWTH SUPPORTERS OF GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVISM - BY SIZE OF COMMUNITY

Options	Size of Community			N
	Under 10,000	10,000 to 100,000	over 100,000	
	%	%	%	
Pro-Growth government activists	68	56	22	222
Anti-Growth government activists	32	44	78	288
	100	100	100	
N =	170	89	251	510
P < .0001				

Table 8 confirms the relationship that has emerged in many of the previous tables: support for government intervention to control the growth of one's area is very much associated with residence in Canada's largest cities. On the other hand, the supporters of government intervention to increase the growth of their area is strongest among those who reside in Canada's smaller communities and rural areas. The desires of each group are not incompatible. In fact, taken together they represent a substantial measure of support for governmental activism in the direction of shifting the current pattern of population growth in Canada.

Government intervention in growth management in Canada is, of course, not a simple matter. There is always the issue of which level of government is to be chiefly responsible for this activity. For this reason people who stated that they thought government should be more active in growth management as well as those who were satisfied by the present degree of activity were subsequently asked which level of government they thought "should take the predominant role in managing urban growth".

As Table 9 indicates, no one level is perceived as predominantly responsible for managing urban growth: over the sample as a whole 23% of the people who had an opinion on the subject pointed exclusively to the provincial government, 17% exclusively to the federal and 14% exclusively to local government. The rest mentioned some combination of governments.

TABLE 9

PREFERRED LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT FOR MANAGING URBAN GROWTH

Level	%
Federal Government	17
Provincial Government	23
Local Government	14
Federal and Provincial Governments	16
Federal and Local Governments	4
Provincial and Local Governments	15
None, all equally	13

When the data are organized to show whether a certain level is mentioned at all (either alone or in combination with another) we find that:

- the provincial government was mentioned by 67%
- the federal government was mentioned by 50%
- the local government was mentioned by 46%.

Clearly the management of growth is not thought of as the preserve of a single level of government. This opinion did not vary greatly according to the community size, education or income of respondents, although there were some small differences according to home ownership. Twenty-two percent of renters as compared to 12% of homeowners were inclined to point exclusively to the federal government. By region, Westerners were more inclined to mention the provinces as having the predominant role.

We have noted earlier, however, that support for government activity in growth management means the encouragement of further growth for some people, its discouragement for others. It is useful, therefore, to examine the preferred level of government in growth management in the light of this. Table 10

TABLE 10

PREFERRED LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT TO TAKE PREDOMINANT
ROLE IN GROWTH MANAGEMENT, BY POSITION ON GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Level	Pro-growth/ favour government intervention	Anti-growth/ favour government intervention
	%	%
Federal	16	20
Provincial	29	23
Local	12	15
Federal-Provincial	13	13
Federal-Local	4	4
Provincial-Local	16	13
Levels equal	10	11
P ≤ .66	N= 220	283

shows that there are no statistically significant differences between the "pro-growth" supporters of government intervention and the "anti-growth" supporters: both are inclined to favour slightly the provinces over either the federal or the local government.

The figures for all respondents suggest that there are some regional differences in perceptions of the level of government considered most responsible for growth management.

Ontario respondents who look to government to be more active in controlling growth are more inclined to mention to federal government (26%) and the local level (21%) than the national sample. By the same token there is also a suggestion that residents of British Columbia are less likely to mention the federal level (only 8%) and much more likely to mention the provincial (38%).

VII A NEW TOWN POLICY FOR CANADA

One widely discussed technique for attempting to control urban growth is the creation of "new towns" outside the orbit of major population centres. New town development in Canada will require cooperative intergovernmental relations, but no matter how delicate the negotiations which precede intergovernmental initiatives to establish a new town, it will inevitably rest with individual Canadians to make a success of those initiatives. It is therefore important to know something of their present perceptions.

No fewer than six questions in the pilot survey were devoted to probing the public's state of mind on this issue. The new town section of the survey began with a preamble (which provided all respondents with a common definition) and a simple almost classical, question about human settlements: their ideal size:

People have been thinking about a New Town policy for Canada -- that is the idea of creating entirely new towns for Canadians to live in. Please tell me, if you were to design a New Town to reflect your own wishes, what size of population do you think would be about right?

No numerical clues were offered; the interviewers were instructed simply to record the responses as given. Table 11 reveals quite clearly one major finding: a majority of Canadians felt that a new town should be, by many contemporary standards, quite small, i.e. under 50,000 -- about the current size of North Bay or Trois-Rivières. Only 8% of those interviewed felt that the size of a new town should exceed 250,000 or the current population of the Windsor area.

TABLE 11

PREFERRED NEW TOWN POPULATION SIZE

Preferred New Town Size	%	N
Under 25,000	32	327
25,000 to 49,999	19	196
50,000 to 99,999	15	151
100,000 to 249,999	7	71
250,000 to 499,999	5	46
500,000 and over	3	28
Oppose any ceiling on size	1	8
No preference as to size	6	61
Don't know	14	143
* rounding error	102*	1031

Some additional suggestive evidence on this matter can be seen in Table 12. The size of respondents' present communities is linked with their size preferences for new towns. There is an obvious, and statistically significant, relationship here in that people now in metropolitan centres tend to support a larger new town population than others. Nevertheless it is very much worth noting that "under 50,000" is the strongest preference for residents of Canada's largest cities (Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Ottawa-Hull), stronger even than for respondents in the second-tier cities of 100,000 to 500,000.

Beyond an agreeable size, what else would Canadians want to see in a new town? In principle, the list of features

TABLE 12

PREFERRED NEW TOWN SIZE BY PRESENT COMMUNITY SIZE

Preferred New Town Size	Under 1,000 %	1,000- 10,000 %	10,000- 100,000 %	100,000 500,000 %	over 500,000 %	All Respondents N
Under 50,000	80	86	54	41	45	523
50,000 - 99,000	6	9	35	24	16	151
100,000 and over	4	3	8	26	30	145
Other	10	2	3	9	9	69
P .001	N= 100 284	100 137	100 148	100 99	100 220	880

which Canadians might volunteer could be endless. A selection of a half-dozen plausible features for new towns was therefore made, and the respondents were asked to rank these features in order of their importance:

- i plenty of good jobs
- ii ample facilities for social, artistic and sports activities
- iii quality housing at reasonable prices
- iv a location near prime recreational land
- v easy access to major existing metropolitan areas
- vi an environment relatively free from pollution

Table 13 clearly indicates that two features -- plenty of good jobs and affordable housing -- far out rank the others.

TABLE 13

OVERALL RANKING OF NEW FEATURES

Feature	Score*	Rank
Plenty of good jobs	5.24	1
Qulaity housing at reasonable prices	4.86	2
An environment relatively free from pollution	3.02	3
Ampee facilities for social, artistic and sports activities	3.02	4
Easy access to major existing Metropolitan areas	2.57	5
A location near prime recreational land	2.31	6

* A score of 6 would result if all respondents ranked an item 1st; a score of 1 would result if all respondents ranked the item 6th.

The question arises whether the list of features which we offered satisfies to any degree the expectations Canadians have about what would make a new town attractive. To test this, we asked all respondents to say "what else they would like to see?" The answers confirm our belief that the general public would indeed invent a long list. But the interesting point is that no one feature added to our list of six features was mentioned by more than 7% of the sample. Just under 7% mentioned educational facilities and just over 4% mentioned facilities such as churches, day care centres, parks and shopping; 69% couldn't think of anything to add.

A further, indirect check on the adequacy of the list of features was provided by the probing question:

Do you think that you yourself would move to one of these new towns if it were planned to have those features described on the card?

It was assumed that any positive score would validate the list and at the same time identify a possible target population for a future new town development strategy.

The responses to this question may be the most interesting of all findings in the pilot survey (See Table 14). Nearly one half of all Canadians surveyed indicated that they would (at least probably) move to a new town planned to have the six features listed above. This proportion seems quite high, and the corresponding figure for those who would probably or definitely not move -- 38% -- unaccountably low.

TABLE 14
WILLINGNESS TO MOVE TO A NEW TOWN

	%	N
Definitely yes	29	295
Probably yes	18	184
Not sure	15	157
Probably not	17	173
Definitely not	21	220
	100	1029

One of the intentions of the pilot survey was to ascertain the importance of locational variables in the overall attractiveness of new towns. Both "easy access to major existing metropolitan

areas" and " a location near prime recreational land" were therefore included in the list of features to be ranked. A related concern is whether a new town should attempt to be self-sufficient or should be constructed within the economic orbit or existing metropolitan areas. This issue was approached indirectly as those respondents who indicated that they would at least probably move to a new town, and those respondents who were not sure whether they would, were asked this additional question:

Suppose that a new town with the features described on this card could only be built some distances from major urban centres -- say, 100 miles away -- would you still be willing to move there?

The 62% of the sample who had indicated that they would move or who were not certain, divided further in the following way: 65% of this group would still move, 14% remained uncertain, and 21% were unwilling to move if it meant a distance of 100 miles from a major urban centre.

Table 15 has been constructed to permit analysis of the characteristics of each type of respondent. The first column, labelled "movers", includes all those who would move to a new town, even though it is located 100 miles from an existing major urban centre. The second column containing those for whom a distance of 100 miles from a metropolis became an unacceptable barrier, has been labelled "movers, not 100 miles". The third column labelled "uncertain" contains those respondents who, even after the probing question, remained unsure. The fourth column

TABLE 15

"MOVERS" AND "NON-MOVERS" BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS

	Movers	Mover-Not 100 Miles	Uncertain	Non- Movers	N
	%	%	%	%	
All Respondents	40	13	9	38	1031
(a) <u>Region</u>					
Maritimes	37	16	16	32	90
Quebec	32	23	8	37	295
Ontario	40	9	9	43	361
Prairies	44	6	11	39	170
B.C.	57	8	4	30	113
				p<.001	
(b) <u>Age</u>					
18-29	63	12	6	19	298
30-39	45	12	10	33	200
40-49	35	14	12	39	167
over 50	20	14	9	57	351
				p<.001	
(c) <u>Education</u>					
Primary	34	14	8	44	565
Secondary	44	13	10	34	283
Some university	56	9	9	27	176
				p<.001	

groups those who initially responded that they would probably or definitely not move to a new town -- the "non-movers".

The significant subsample which we have identified as movers possessed characteristics which set them apart from the others. As can be seen in Table 15 they were disproportionately:

- by age, under 30 (63%)
- by region, from BC (57%)
- by education, some university or better (56%)

Analysis of other personal characteristics showed that, in addition, they were also disproportionately:

- by years at present address, less than 1 (60%)
- by marital status, single (59%)
- by income \$15,000 and over (51%)
- by housing situation, renter (49%)

Clearly the kind of Canadians who would likely react positively to a new town of the type suggested in the interview are not average Canadians: they tend as a group to be younger, better educated, and better paid.

On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the "new town" -- in so far as it resembles the model implicit in the pilot survey -- does not seem to attract (proportionately) many rural Canadians or Maritimers.

Now that something of the personal and social characteristics of movers and non-movers has been established, we should return to the question of the features which new towns should possess to discover what these Canadians with different propensities to move want for their new towns. To ascertain this, Table 16 was constructed.

TABLE 16

NEW TOWN FEATURES BY WILLINGNESS TO MOVE

Feature	Movers	Movers-Not 100 miles	Uncertain	Non- movers	National
Plenty of good jobs	5.29	4.95	5.25	5.28	5.24
Affordable housing	4.80	4.80	5.00	4.91	4.86
Little pollution	3.12	3.11	2.69	2.96	3.02
Social facilities	3.12	2.95	3.01	2.94	3.02
Location near recreational land	2.37	2.05	2.21	2.35	2.31
Access to existing metropolitan areas	2.33	3.20	2.84	2.55	2.57

It demonstrates that at the national level jobs and housing predominated in these rankings, and environmental features weighed somewhat more heavily than locational considerations.

Among subsets of the sample again there was a high degree of consensus on the relative important of job and housing, but there were some interesting variations. The movers and those who would move less than 100 miles ranked affordable housing slightly below the others; they also valued an environment relatively free from pollution slightly more. Further, movers were the most inclined to favour ample facilities for social, artistic and sports activities, and were the least inclined to show

concern for access to major metropolitan areas.

Finally, when willingness to move was analysed with respect to the question of the preferred size of the new town, the group identified as "movers" mirrored the national findings. They shared the general consensus that new towns should be kept rather small.

VIII TRANSPORTATION SUBSIDIES AND TAXATION

Although it was not by any means a major focus of the pilot survey, we did attempt to deal with one important issue at the core of the continuing debate on urban transportation systems.

Concern has been raised about the social and environmental costs resulting from continued dependence on the private automobile for urban transportation. Some cities have attempted through increased subsidies to public transportation to find a means of reducing traffic congestion and air pollution in urban areas. As the community as a whole benefits from increased transit ridership, the argument goes, the costs of reducing or even eliminating fares on public transit systems should be borne by the community as a whole in the form of higher taxes. To ascertain whether the public at large would be receptive to increased subsidies of this kind, respondents were confronted with a trade-off:

A few cities have tried to encourage the use of public transportation in order to reduce traffic congestion and pollution. How would you feel if this were done by reducing or eliminating fares on buses, street cars and subways and meeting the costs out of your taxes?

The pattern of responses indicates anything but a consensus on the question as stated. Taken overall, the data show that 40% of those interviewed, would approve of such a subsidy at least to an extent, 42% would disapprove, and the remainder would feel indifferent or uncertain about it (See Table 17).

TABLE 17

ATTITUDES ON TRANSIT FARE REDUCTION THROUGH SUBSIDY

Attitudes	%	N
Approve strongly	22	222
Approve somewhat	18	180
Neither approve or disapprove	10	106
Disapprove somewhat	12	125
Disapprove strongly	30	310
Do not know	9	88
P < .001	101*	1031

* Rounding error

As might be imagined, attitudes toward subsidies are related to one's mode of daily transportation. As Table 18 demonstrates, those who at present use systems of public transportation were most in favour of further subsidies, followed by those who now walk to work*. A majority of those now using private cars to commute to and from their jobs opposed the fare reduction through subsidy.

* It is interesting to note that the pilot survey produced national (and regional) breakdowns on mode of travel to work very comparable to those obtained on three occasions recently by Statistics Canada in their Labour Force Participation surveys (N = 30,000).

TABLE 18

ATTITUDES TOWARD TRANSIT FARE REDUCTION THROUGH SUBSIDY BY MODE OF TRAVEL

Mode of Travel	Approve %	Uncertain %	Disapprove %	%	N
Drive own car	39	10	51	100	344
Ride car pool	47	12	41	100	49
Public transit	55	6	40	100	91
Walking	52	15	32	100	65
Mixture of modes	47	13	40	100	30
Non-travellers	41	13	46	100	362

P .0001

What may be surprising is the relative weakness of the association between the mode of transportation and attitudes. For, while a majority of those now using their own cars to commute to work opposed subsidies, they did so by a margin that was not much beyond non-travellers.

As to the regional variations, in the Maritimes, where access to public transit is lower than the national average, support for further subsidy was similarly less attractive. On the other hand, in British Columbia -- where use of public transport is slightly below the national average -- support for the idea of reducing transit fares through subsidies was the highest of any region, as is indicated in Table 19. In Quebec, even though accessibility

TABLE 19

ATTITUDES TOWARD TRANSIT SUBSIDY BY REGION

Attitude	Maritimes	Quebec	Region Ontario	Prairies	B.C.	All Respondents
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly or somewhat approved	33	38	46	43	49	43
Uncertain	11	10	12	10	14	11
Strongly or somewhat disapproved	57	51	42	47	38	46
	N = (76)	(263)	(345)	(150)	(109)	(943)
			P	.001		

to public transit is almost equal to Ontario, the idea of fare reduction through further subsidy had much less appeal than in Ontario.

In larger communities, where the use of public transit is much higher, a generally more positive attitude toward further subsidy was expected and indeed, was confirmed by our data (see Table 20). But an interesting point to observe here is that even car users in larger communities eased their opposition and pro and con-attitudes toward the idea were almost equally distributed among them.

Although the option posed made it clear that fares would be reduced or eliminated by meeting the costs out of taxes, it did not suggest either what kind of taxes or which level of government would be responsible for the tax. Rather than pursue

TABLE 20

ATTITUDES TOWARD PUBLIC TRANSIT FARE REDUCTION THROUGH
FURTHER SUBSIDY BY MODES OF TRANSPORTATION IN LARGE COMMUNITIES
(Population 100,000 and over)

Attitudes	MODES OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK				
	Drive own car/truck	Ride Car Pool	Public Transit	Walking	Mixture of Modes
	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	44	61	53	65	60
Not sure	10	28	7	8	5
Disapprove	47	11	40	27	35
N =	(173)	(18)	(77)	(26)	(20)
			P .02		

this complex question in the pilot survey, we settled for a single question which explored feelings about taxes in general.

Municipal politicians are fond of pointing out the difficulties of raising property taxes. Whereas the federal and provincial governments have enjoyed access to the major tax fields -- income and sales taxes -- which are responsive to growth and inflation, revenues from the property tax have lagged far behind, leaving local government uniquely disadvantaged.

In order to discover something of tax-payers' resistance to various types of taxes, in the wording of the question which follows, care was taken to keep the focus on the tax itself and not on the level of government which uses it:

We are now going to change the subject to taxes. It is probably fair to say that nobody likes having to pay taxes, but we are interested in knowing you feel about the various types of taxes. Would you please rank the following three taxes according to how much you dislike them, starting with the tax you dislike the most? The three taxes are the income tax, sales tax, and property tax.

TABLE 21
ATTITUDES TOWARD THREE TYPES OF TAXES*

	INCOME TAX %	SALES TAX %	PROPERTY TAX %
Most disliked	45	37	19
Middle	30	40	29
Least Disliked	<u>25</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>52</u>
	100	100	100
N =	921	928	920

* The sample from Alberta was excluded in computing this table since there is no provincial sales tax.

The results shown in Table 21 are interesting. Even allowing for the fact that the time of interviewing, early April 1975, coincided for most Canadians with their annual preparation of income tax returns and may therefore have added to the expressions of dislike for that particular tax, the magnitude of the differences in the national ranking suggests that a subsequent study would replicate the order, if not the exact percentages, of the present study.

As can be seen, income tax was the most disliked type of tax. The sales tax, evaluation of which could not have been affected by the timing of the survey ranked second. Nationally, it was the property tax which emerged as "least disliked", a fact which might come as a surprise, especially since roughly 60% of the sample were homeowners.

Regionally, there were as might be expected, certain variations in the evaluations. Reversals from the national pattern occurred in the Maritimes, in Ontario, and in

British Columbia. In the Maritime provinces, as in B.C., the property tax appears to have been more disliked than the sales tax. In Ontario, the sales tax -- seven per cent at the time of interviewing -- was the most disliked tax.

Although homeowners were more somewhat inclined to say they disliked the property tax than renters, and middle income people disliked the income tax more than high or low income people, attitudes toward taxes were associated (in statistically significant ways) with few other emphases in the pilot survey. They did not correlate with orientations to growth management of either Canada's three metropolitan areas or of one's own area. They did not correlate systematically with any attitudes toward increased governmental activism generally, with the new towns policy issues, nor with responses identifying which level should take the predominant role in growth management. Nor were attitudes toward taxes statistically associated with respondents' present community size, sex, occupation, or educational level.

Among the many areas to be explored further through survey research is the public's perception of

- the trade-off involved in growth management
- the means available for affecting patterns of urban growth
- the degree of firmness of government intervention that is regarded as acceptable.

In addition, it would be useful to know the extent to which citizens burdens of taxation for the sake of increased governmental activism on behalf of their cities and towns. It is important to know more, as well, of their perceptions of the level of government -- and therefore the tax base --

involved.

This pilot survey has clearly demonstrated that there exist significant numbers of people "out there" with views relevant to the issue of the management of urban growth. Hopefully, it has also established a case for discovering more.

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